

Claims

1. A method of servicing a customer of a contractor by a third-party website provider, such method comprising the steps of:
- 5 providing a first website by the third-party website provider for use by the customer in selecting product options of product offerings available from or through the contractor;
- 10 receiving from the customer through the first website a selection of an option of the options provided by the contractor; and
- 15 collecting a fee or commission based upon the received selection made by the customer.
- 20 2. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 1 further comprising password protecting the first website.
- 25 3. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 1 wherein the step of collecting the fee or commission based upon the selection made by the customer further comprises collecting the fee or commission from the contractor.
- 30 4. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 1 wherein the step of providing the first website further comprises providing a webpage associated with a feature offered by the contractor.
- 35 5. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 4 wherein the step of providing the webpage further comprises providing a plurality of options on

the webpage relating to the feature for selection of
the option by the customer.

✓ 6. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
5 as in claim 5 further comprising providing a plurality
of webpages each related to a feature provided by the
contractor to the customer.

7. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
10 as in claim 4 further comprising providing a hyperlink
to a manufacturer on the webpage for selection by the
customer.

8. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
15 as in claim 7 wherein the step of providing the
hyperlink further comprises collecting a commission
from the manufacturer for any sale based upon
activation of the hyperlink.

20J 9. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 1 further comprising providing a second
website associated with the first website by the third-
party website provider for entry of information related
to the customer by the contractor.

25 10. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 9 wherein the entered information further
comprises features.

30 11. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 9 wherein the step of providing the second

website further comprises allowing access to the second website by a party designated by the customer.

✓ 12. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 9 wherein the entered information further
comprises an identifier of the customer.

✓ 13. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 9 further comprising password protecting
the second website.

✓ 14. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 1 further comprising displaying an
advertisement of a vendor on the first website.

15 ✓ 15. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 14 further comprising collecting a
commission from the vendor for displaying the
advertisement.

20 16. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 14 further comprising allowing the
contractor to customize the first website for the
contractor's product offerings.

25 ✓ 17. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor
as in claim 14 further comprising providing upselling
options to the customer based upon the option selected
by the customer.

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website for access by a general public for general information on features provided by the contractor.

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19. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 1 further comprising exchanging design files between the builder and a third party contracting designer.

✓ 20. The method of servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 1 further comprising exchanging product files among the builder, suppliers and manufactures using a common file format.

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21. An apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor by a third-party website provider, such apparatus comprising:

means for providing a first website by the third-party website provider for use by the customer in selecting product options of product offerings available from the contractor;

means for receiving from the customer through the first website a selection of an option of the options provided by the contractor; and

means for collecting a commission based upon the received selection made by the customer.

✓ 22. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 21 further comprising means for password protecting the first website.

30 ✓ 23. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 21 wherein the means for

collecting the commission based upon the selection made by the customer further comprises means for collecting the commission from the contractor.

- 5 \ 24. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 21 wherein the means for providing the first website further comprises means for providing a webpage associated with a feature offered by the contractor.
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- \ 25. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 24 wherein the means for providing the webpage further comprises means for providing a plurality of options on the webpage relating to the feature for selection of the option by the customer.
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- \ 26. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 25 further comprising means for providing a plurality of webpages each related to a feature provided by the contractor to the customer.
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- \ 27. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 24 further comprising means for providing a hyperlink to a manufacturer on the webpage for selection by the customer.
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- \ 28. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 27 wherein the means for providing the hyperlink further comprises means for collecting a commission from the manufacturer for any sale based upon activation of the hyperlink.
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- ✓ 29. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 21 further comprising means for providing a second website associated with the first 5 website by the third-party website provider for entry of information related to the customer by the contractor.
- ✓ 30. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 29 wherein the entered 10 information further comprises features.
- ✓ 31. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 29 wherein the entered 15 information further comprises an identifier of the customer.
- ✓ 32. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 29 further comprising means for 20 password protecting the second website.
- ✓ 33. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 21 further comprising means for providing a third website for access by a general 25 public for general information on features provided by the contractor.
- ✓ 34. An apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor by a third-party website provider, such 30 apparatus comprising:
a first website provided by the third-party website provider for use by the customer in selecting

product options of product offerings available from the contractor;

- a selection processor receiving from the customer through the first website a selection of an option of
5 the options provided by the contractor; and
but as
a commission processor adapted to collect a commission based upon the received selection made by the customer.

10 \ 35. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a contractor as in claim 34 further comprising a password adapted to protect the first website.

\ 36. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a
15 contractor as in claim 34 wherein the first website further comprises a webpage adapted to provide a feature offered by the contractor.

\ 37. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a
20 contractor as in claim 36 further comprising a plurality of webpages adapted to provide a plurality of features provided by the contractor to the customer.

38. The apparatus for servicing a customer of a
25 contractor as in claim 34 further comprising a hyperlink to a manufacturer on the webpage for selection by the customer.

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